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Serial No. 10/797,645

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet from the drawings includes changes to Figs. 3-5. The sheet replaces the original sheet including Figs. 3-5. In Figs. 3-5, reference character "35" is designated as the threaded portion of the first sleeve 30, and reference character "65" is designated as the threaded portion of the second sleeve 60. Fig. 5 is corrected to show the longitudinally extending seam 44. No new matter is added in these amendments to the drawings.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested. Claims 1-6, 8-16, and 18-20 are pending. Claims 1, 11-16, and 18-20 are amended, and claims 7 and 17 are canceled.

The specification is amended to designate reference character "35" as the threaded portion of the first sleeve 30 and reference character "65" as the threaded portion of the second sleeve 60. Thus, reference character "36" is consistent in referring to one element, the intermediate portion of the first sleeve, and reference character "66" is consistent in referring to one element, the intermediate portion of the second sleeve. The abstract of the disclosure is amended to comply with the proper format as stated in the office action. No new matter is added in the specification by these changes. Therefore, this objection to the specification should be withdrawn.

The drawings are corrected to designate reference character "35" as the threaded portion of the first sleeve 30, and reference character "65" as the threaded portion of the second sleeve 60. Figure 5 of the drawings is corrected to show the longitudinally extending seam 44. An annotated drawing sheet is provided that shows these changes marked in red. No new matter is added in the drawings by these changes. Therefore, the objection to the drawings should be withdrawn.

Claims 11-14, 16, and 19-20 are amended to change "an adjustable tie rod" to "a tie rod". Claim 11 is also amended "socket attachment means" to "socket". Claims 15 and 18 are amended to change "turnbuckle" to "tie rod" to properly refer to the tie rod stated in the preamble of claim 11, which claims 15 and 18 depend. Proper antecedent basis for claims 11-20 is now provided for these elements. Support for the tie rod and socket is disclosed at page 4, lines 8-10 of the specification, which portion is reprinted below with these elements underline.

"The steerable wheels 12 are connected to a center link 14 through a corresponding pair of tie rods 16 and sockets 18."

Applicant respectfully submits that the specification does provide proper antecedent basis for the "first tie rod member, "second tie rod member" in claims 11-20, and first, second, third, and fourth surfaces in claim 8. In particular, support for the first, second, third, and fourth surfaces of the connector member 90 is disclose at page 8, lines 21-23 and page 9, lines 11-13 of the specification, which portions are reprinted below with these elements underline.

"Upon deforming the sleeve 30 and the connector member 90, parallel inner surfaces 96 and 98 (Figs. 3 and 5) are formed on the connector member.".....

"Upon deforming the sleeve 60 and the connector member 90, parallel inner surfaces 106 and 108 are formed on the connector member."

Support for the "first tie rod member" and second "tie rod member" is disclosed at page 10, lines 19-23, which portion is reprinted below with these elements underline.

"The turnbuckle assembly 20 serves as an adjuster to fix the effective axial length of a tie rod 16, as shown in Fig. 1, by controlling the axial spacing between oppositely threaded first and second threaded parts or tie rod members 120 and 122 of the tie rod."

Therefore, this objection to the specification and claims should be withdrawn. Claim 11 is also amended as suggested by the examiner to correct the informalities.

Claims 1 and 11 are amended to recite that the first sleeve is hollow throughout the extent of the first sleeve and the second sleeve is hollow through the extent of the second sleeve. Claim 1 is also amended to recite that second axial end of said first sleeve has a first flat outer surface extending parallel and transverse to the axis of said first sleeve. The connecting member has a first flat inner surface extending parallel and transverse to the axis of the first sleeve and engageable with the first outer surface of the second axial end of the first sleeve to prevent relative rotation between the connecting member and the first sleeve. The first sleeve includes an intermediate portion located between the first axial end of the first sleeve and the second end axial end of the first sleeve. The intermediate portion of the first

sleeve longitudinally tapers inwardly at all sides from the first axial end of the first sleeve to the second axial end of the first sleeve to define a frusto-conical shape.

Claims 1 and 11 are further amended to recite that the second axial end of the second sleeve has a first flat outer surface extending parallel and transverse to the axis of the second sleeve. The connecting member has a second flat inner surface extending parallel and transverse to the axis of the second sleeve and engageable with the first outer surface of the second axial end of the second sleeve to prevent relative rotation between the connecting member and the second sleeve. The second sleeve includes an intermediate portion located between the first axial end of the second sleeve and the second axial end of the second sleeve. The intermediate portion of the second sleeve longitudinally tapers inwardly at all sides from the first axial end of the second sleeve to the second axial end of the second sleeve to define a frusto-conical shape.


Claim 1 patenably defines over Broszat, Benoit, and Braisted Jr. Neither Broszat nor Benoit nor Braisted Jr. disclose or suggest all of these above mentioned features. By contrast, Broszat discloses cylindrical tubes 1 that have curved surfaces. Benoit end members 12 and 14 appear to be solid as depicted in Fig. 2 and thus are not hollow throughout their extent. Braisted Jr. fails to disclose any of the above mentioned features. Therefore, claims 1 and 11 are allowable. Claims 2-6 and 8-10, which depend indirectly or directly from claim 1, are allowable as depending from an allowable claim and also for the specific limitations recited therein. Claims 12-16 and 18-20, which depend indirectly or directly from claim 11, are allowable as depending from an allowable claim and also for the specific limitations recited therein.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

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Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment
to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


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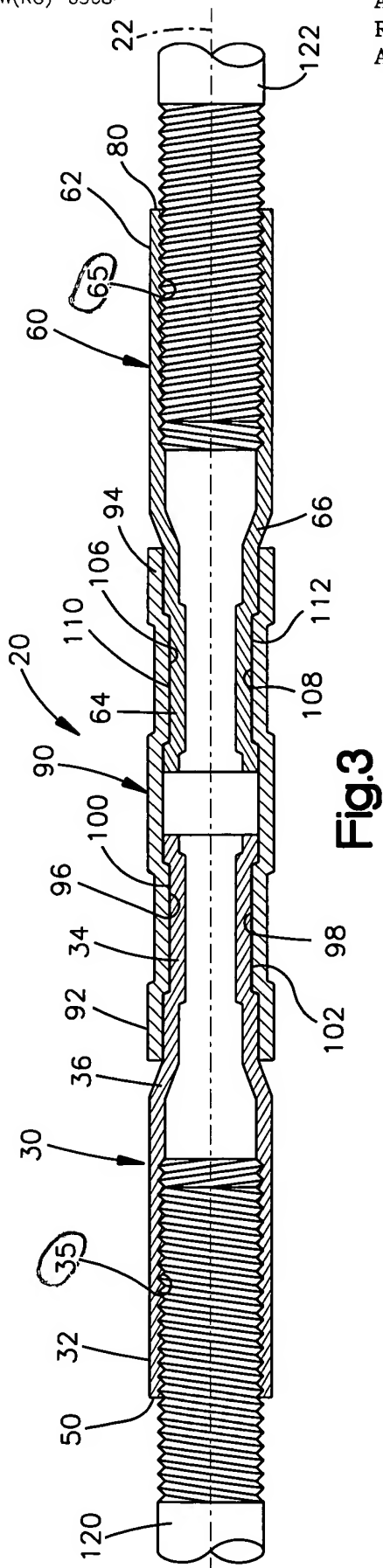


Fig. 3

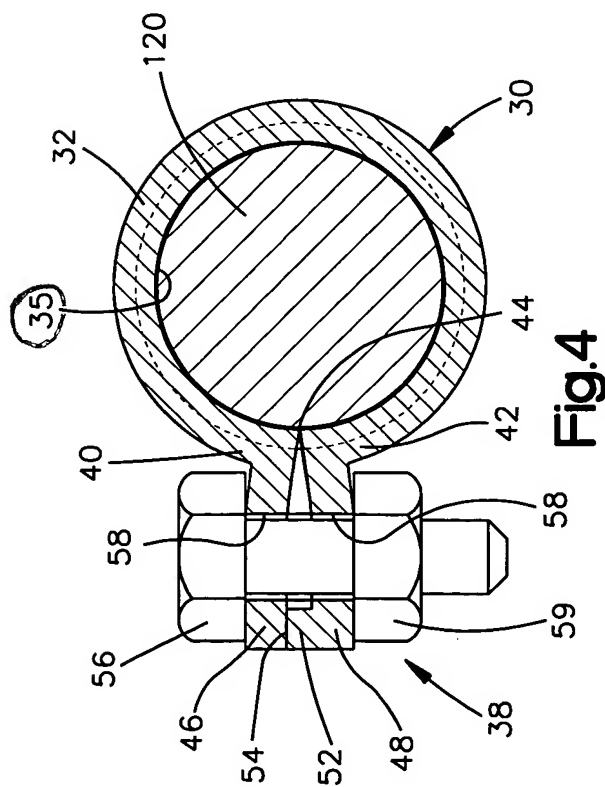


Fig. 4

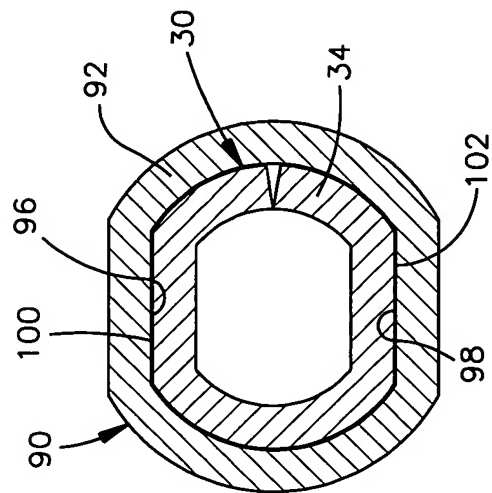


Fig. 5

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